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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 002042

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA - MADOBE DISPLACES AL-SHABAAB IN KISMAYO;  
RELATIONSHIP WITH TFG TENUOUS

Classified By: Somalia Unit Counselor Bob Patterson for reasons 1.4(b,d  
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¶1. (C) Summary: Forces loyal to Ahmed Madobe and Ibrahim Shukri, aligned with Darod/Kabalah/Absame/Ogaden and Darod/Kabalah/Harti clan militia on September 25 moved into Kismayo town, displacing al-Shabaab militia from all but a few checkpoint locations. (Note: Madobe and Shukri in recent months have been in quiet and complicated negotiations with the TFG, and Madobe has largely supplanted al-Turki as leader of the predominately Ogaden-clan Ras Kamboni brigades. End note.) Clan elders on September 26 met with Madobe to encourage him to partner with local elders and leaders in Lower Juba and to refrain from cooperation with Hisbul Islam's Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys. Madobe reportedly remains hesitant to publicly announce any connection to the TFG for fear some of the more conservative Islamist forces within his alliance will defect to al-Shabaab before the town is firmly in the control of his Darod/Kabalah alliance. TFG reactions to Madobe's efforts in Lower Juba appear both fluid and divided. In addition to a complicated relationship with the TFG, Madobe will most likely have to contend with multiple local competitors for top leadership of Kismayo. End summary.

¶2. (C) Forces loyal to Ahmed Madobe and Ibrahim Shukri, aligned with Darod/Kabalah/Absame/Ogaden and Darod/Kabalah/Harti clan militia on September 25 moved into Kismayo town, displacing al-Shabaab militia from all but a few checkpoint locations. As of September 27, tensions remained high in the town and our contacts tell us local residents expected fighting to erupt between remaining al-Shabaab forces and the Darod/Kabalah alliance. Al-Shabaab forces reportedly withdrew from Kismayo without a fight when confronted by overwhelming numbers of opposing forces. According to a prominent Ogaden clan elder from the same diya-paying group as Madobe and Hassan al-Turki, al-Turki on September 27 asked Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys to send reinforcements to Kismayo in order to undercut Madobe's efforts. (Note: A diya-paying group is the smallest kinship unit in the Somali clan structure. Madobe and Shukri in recent months have been in quiet and complicated negotiations with the TFG and Madobe has largely supplanted al-Turki as leader of the predominately Ogaden-clan Ras Kamboni brigades. End note.) Clan elders in Lower Juba on September 27 told us Aweys had not answered al-Turki's request and that there were no Hisbul Islam forces from Mogadishu in the area. However, the clan elders said they thought some TFG leaders were giving false reports to the press in order to discredit Madobe.

¶3. (C) According to a contact close to Shukri, clan elders on September 26 met with Madobe to encourage him to

clearly reject assistance from Aweys's forces. Local elders and leaders in Lower Juba, to include Juba Resistance Movement chairman Mohamed Amin, intend to deliver the same message to Madobe in Kismayo within the next two days, according to our contacts. Our contacts tell us Madobe contacted Somali commanders being trained in Kenya and the exiled TFG governor of Kismayo to reconfirm his willingness to work together to consolidate control of Kismayo and Lower Juba. (Note: We do not think the few dozen forces trained in Kenya bring much to the military table for Madobe. However, Madobe's reported willingness to ally with these forces, if true, is most likely meant to convince the TFG he can be trusted. End note.) Madobe reportedly remains hesitant to publicly announce loyalty to the TFG for fear some of the Islamist forces within the Darod/Kabalah alliance will defect to al-Shabaab before the town is firmly in the control of his Darod/Kabalah alliance. An Ogaden-clan contact close to Madobe and supportive of the TFG opined that Madobe is in a difficult position because if he announces support for the TFG he will give Aweys ammunition, but if he does not allay the TFG's distrust "the TFG may prepare forces to confront him." (Note: Somalia Unit does not believe the TFG has the capacity to project power in Lower Juba. End note.)

¶4. (C) TFG reactions to Madobe's efforts in Lower Juba appear both fluid and divided. Our contacts tell us the Prime Minister in August was reprimanded by President Sharif for conducting talks with Madobe and feared his position would be in jeopardy if he again attempted to broker peace with his clan's region. (Note: The Prime Minister is also from the Darod clan. End Note.) However, a contact close to Sharif on September 27 told us he spoke to the President before

NAIROBI 00002042 002 OF 002

Sharif left for the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York and was successful in convincing Sharif that Madobe is "flexible". Several Ogaden and Harti clan elders tell us they fear key Hawiye leaders within the TFG will attempt to discredit Madobe because of Hawiye interest in controlling Kismayo port. TFG Minister of State Abdirashid Hidig on September 27 said he supported Madobe's efforts in the town. A contact in touch with Madobe on September 27 told us Madobe thinks Hidig's statement of support was ill-advised and is now worried that some of his forces may turn on him. As of the afternoon of September 27, al-Shabaab was using Hidig's statement to encourage some of Madobe's forces to desert to their side, prompting Madobe to consider making a press statement that he is not with the TFG. A contact in close communication with Madobe on September 27 told us Madobe was attempting to talk to Sharif (currently in the U.S.) to assure the President that any such statements he might make would be false and would only represent a tactical move to survive and consolidate control of Kismayo. The same contact told us later that Madobe, after speaking to TFG Ambassador to Kenya "Americo," spoke to the VOA and said his actions were in coordination with local communities and that those against him were against local interests.

¶4. (C) In addition to a complicated relationship with the TFG, Madobe must also contend with multiple would-be competitors for top leadership of Kismayo. Al-Turki, Madobe, Shukri, and the exiled governor of Kismayo all belong the same diya group. Our contacts tell us that even if Madobe agreed to share power with other subclans and local leaders in Lower Juba, it is almost certain that only one Warfa (diya group) leader would be able to hold a position within such an alliance. Clan elders on September 27 told us that they think Madobe's Warfa allies will not directly fight him, but will attempt to raise suspicion about Madobe with the TFG and the international community in order to maneuver for any would-be Warfa position.

¶5. (C) Comment: We are encouraging contacts close to Madobe to continue discussions with local leaders, clan elders, and business leaders in Lower Juba. We have advised contacts close to Madobe that, even if false, statements of non-support for the TFG by Madobe would deepen the crisis of distrust that exists between him and the TFG and give ammunition to his competitors and detractors. Madobe

reportedly intends to call Somalia Unit PolOff because he wants to explain first hand his strategy and plan for Kismayo. We think Madobe's reported willingness to cooperate with local leaders in Juba and link, however quietly to the TFG, is highly fluid and dependent on Madobe's assessment of whether the TFG is willing to accept his leadership in Lower Juba. Since the TFG rarely speaks with one voice, we expect to hear some within the TFG condemn Madobe's Islamist affiliations while others will attempt to broker an agreement with the Darod/Kabalah alliance.

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